

# MECHANICAL MEMORIES MAGAZINE

ISSUE 40

DEC. 2009



*The only UK magazine dedicated to vintage penny slot machines*

# Mechanical Memories Magazine

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# Editorial

Hello again, and here we are with the last magazine of the year. What year?.....the year that's just flown by! I can't help feeling that I've blinked, and missed it. At this point I should like to thank all those who have made contributions to the magazine this year, without whose help I would have been truly stuffed! This really had been a hectic time for me, and the situation is not likely to improve next year, so please keep the articles coming in.

Now, two news items this month: first the auction, which I think all would agree was a great day out, and probably our greatest success so far. It could have been a disaster though! On my way to Coventry, the traffic on the M1 came to an abrupt halt at about 6.50 (still pitch black). As the time rolled-on, I was getting increasingly concerned, as there had obviously been a serious accident further up. By the time the traffic started moving again, it was broad daylight and I was three-quarters of an hour late. I raced to Coventry and all was just about OK. But then later in the morning as people were starting to arrive, we heard of serious hold-ups on the M42, due I understand to a big show at the NEC. I just hope there were not too many of you who gave up, turned round and went home! Anyway, it all turned out fine, and I think we all had a most enjoyable day. I've provisionally set the date for next year's event as 28<sup>th</sup> November, which will be confirmed in due course.

The second piece of really good news is that Dreamland has finally been awarded its first big lump of funding! As you all know, the Dreamland project has been driven by a dedicated team of passionate enthusiasts for a good number of years now, and it's really good news to learn that all that dedication had finally paid-off, and that Dreamland can now move forward and become a very special 'vintage' attraction. See Nick's report on the following page.

Well, that's about it for 2009. Sharron and I wish you all a merry Christmas and a very happy and prosperous New Year.

Until 2010

All the best

***Jerry***



# Dreamland

## MARGATE

### Save Dreamland Update December 2009

Last month I told you about the application we made to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport for £4m grant funding to allow us to start work on building the world's first amusement park of thrilling historic rides. Well, we did it!

In the most important landmark in our nearly seven years of campaigning to save Dreamland, the Government announced on Monday that it has awarded £3.7m to the project. This is the largest grant in the 2009 Sea Change programme, funded by DCMS (Department for Culture Media and Sport), which is designed to invigorate England's seaside towns through investment in culture and heritage. This is absolutely fantastic news and means that we can now start drawing up the detailed plans to deliver this world's first visitor attraction, and should be on site building the new attraction in June next year.

The Scenic Railway roller coaster has not operated since 2006 and of course was badly damaged by fire following an arson attack last year. This grant should now secure the future of this remarkable structure and allow work to start on rebuilding it next year, along with all the other rides that we have rescued. We could see scaffolding around the Scenic in a matter of months!

The Dreamland Margate project is being led by The Dreamland Trust, a not-for-profit company born out of the Save Dreamland Campaign. The £3.7m grant will help to create an exciting theme park from the past on the Dreamland site, giving the chance to enjoy spectacular historic amusement park rides. Many of these have been rescued by the Save Dreamland Campaign from amusement parks across the UK over the past decade and many are the last surviving examples of their type.

The rides will be built around the centre piece of the park, the Scenic Railway, the oldest surviving roller coaster in the UK and the fourth oldest in the world. Restoration work will also be carried out on the Grade II listed Dreamland cinema building, creating a major new visitor attraction of international significance.

We also announced on 10th December that we have appointed Jonathan Bryant as Project Director, who will be responsible for implementing the project. With a wealth of experience in the heritage and leisure sectors and in business leadership, Jonathan, who's originally from East London, established the UK's first brewing museum and opened a working coal mine to the public in Staffordshire. In Scotland he led the City of Dundee's renaissance Discovery project as chief executive and on the River Thames set up Henley's River & Rowing Museum, which won the coveted Museum of the Year



Award and was short listed for the Stirling Prize for the work of its architect David Chipperfield – also project architect for Margate's Turner Contemporary. More recently Jonathan project directed Birmingham's Thinktank Science Centre and for the last five years has been member of British Waterways' senior management team. He is also an active volunteer in the cultural & heritage sector and has served as chairman of the Association of Independent Museums, trustee and chairman of Dundee's contemporary art gallery, trustee of Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust and, currently, chairman of Watermen's Hall Preservation Trust in London. He has one daughter aged six and is a keen cinema goer, walker and motorcyclist.

He has a reputation for action and for successfully bringing forward first-class heritage attractions delivered with commercial and creative flair. With Jonathan's excellent track record, I am sure that we will be able to deliver a Dreamland that we can be proud of. Jonathan joins The Dreamland Trust in January 2010. The Trust has also appointed Jan Leandro as Audience Development Officer and Graham Ward as Project Archivist, both of whom also start in January 2010.

## *Nick Laister*

Chair of Trustees, The Dreamland Trust

[www.dreamlandmargate.com](http://www.dreamlandmargate.com)  
[www.savedreamland.co.uk](http://www.savedreamland.co.uk)

## **Editor's Note**

See the following page for details of a new book, which I'm sure will be of interest to many. I've already ordered my copy, so if space permits next month I'll publish a short review. But don't wait till then – get your orders in now!

# **Dreamland Remembered: 90th Anniversary Edition**

**by Nick Evans**

Margate's Dreamland park opened in July 1920 and millions flocked to enjoy its attractions in the decades that followed. A visit to the Kent coast resort wasn't complete without a ride on the famed Scenic Railway, the Big Wheel or the Dodgem Cars.

Dreamland's trendsetting 1930s cinema led the way in design while the ballroom became famous for dancing and big name music concerts. Its restaurants fed the hordes descending on Margate for their beanfeast outings. Later on, it would hold its own as an exciting theme park. The resort's decline in recent years has taken its toll, leaving many yearning for a return to simpler times when candy floss and kiss me quick hats were the order of the day.

This edition of Dreamland Remembered, updated and expanded to celebrate the park's 90th anniversary, contains a nostalgic collection of nearly 250 illustrations from its earliest days to the latest ideas to create a heritage theme park.

The book is being offered by Joyland Books at a special discounted price of £14.99 (RRP £15.99), exclusive to readers of Mechanical Memories Magazine.

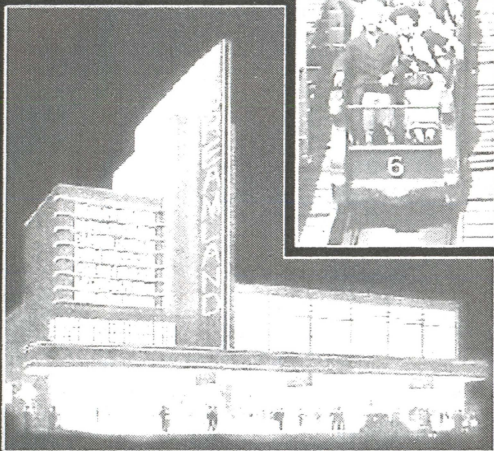
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# Dreamland Remembered E A M L A N D

90th ANNIVERSARY EDITION



Celebrating Margate's famous amusement park  
by NICK EVANS

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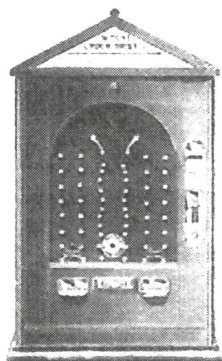
**Publication Date:** 24 October 2009

**Publisher:** Bygone Publishing



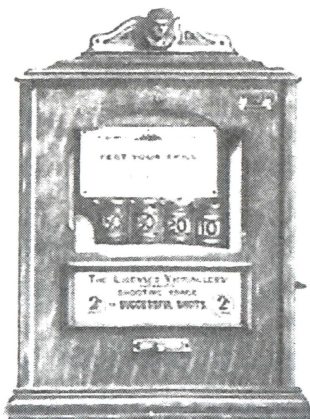
## AUTOMATIC MACHINES.

There is a lot of machinery automatic and otherwise, used to arrange to put a large number of machines in a public place, as the Washington Square, being a common place, and the reason of this is, it is a time when the machines are used, and the machines which supplied me with a power of 100,000, for one month. You may find the machines in the



The "Trot" Machine

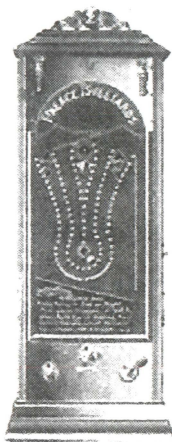
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The "Barrel" Machine

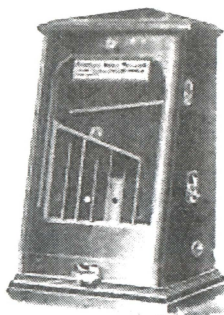
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machines which supplied me with a power of 100,000, for one month. You may find the machines in the



The "Billiards" Machine

machines which supplied me with a power of 100,000, for one month. You may find the machines in the



The "Billiards" Machine

machines which supplied me with a power of 100,000, for one month. You may find the machines in the

# Victuallers' Shooting Range

By John Peterson

Before we shove off on today's story, first a swing by the editor's desk. Daniel Webster defines 'victualler' as: "1) the keeper of a restaurant or tavern; 2) one that provisions an army, a navy, or a ship with food; 3) an army or navy provisions ship." With that under our belts, cast off the lines; we're underway with today's tale.

I remain in semi-constant amazement at the number of British coin-operated games that have found their way across the Atlantic to America. I have heard various explanations as to why: the antique container craze of the 60s where shipping vessels were stuffed with flotsam-jetsam from England for an ever gullible American public and their insatiable appetite for anything British; or the twin demon scavengers of British arcade who swept through fairs and seaside resorts, grabbing all discarded games for foreign disbursement. I like to think that there was a much simpler force at play. I believe that the **Karma Force Commander (KFC)**, ruler of the coin-op universe, knew in his infinite wisdom that one day, in the distant future, in a land far, far away (the cold and windy state of Minnesota in the United States of America,) there would be an enterprising lad who would grow up to love and cherish all these orphans from a long forgotten period of British history; the time when English men, woman and children frolicked and played in their innocent youth with the magical games of chance. You think not? What else explains my marvellous success at cornering some of the best games from Britain's high water era of coin-op history? Still think I'm kidding? Read on, Doubting Thomas.

The games I favour within my own collection are those by the manufacturer Handan-Ni. I own three games by them: **Domino Model 4**, **Multi-ball**, and **Bomb Dropper**. All three share several common traits. They are close to the turn of the century, all three are ball drop games and they are all visually stunning. It is with great sorrow that I had to announce to the 'hand-and-eye' group: "Move over, boys; there is a new kid on your block!"

I have advocated tirelessly for expanding your knowledge first before looking to expand your collection. Part of the challenge with collecting British games is the lack of written literature on the subject. There is one decent book on the field, *Automatic Pleasures*, by Nic Costa. This pitiful state of credible information impedes both collectors and researchers from advancing their knowledge of the rich history of British coin games and those English inventors who so clearly displayed their ingenuity with early design and development. In spite of this impediment, the coin-op stars do align upon occasion to illuminate a jewel from the past.

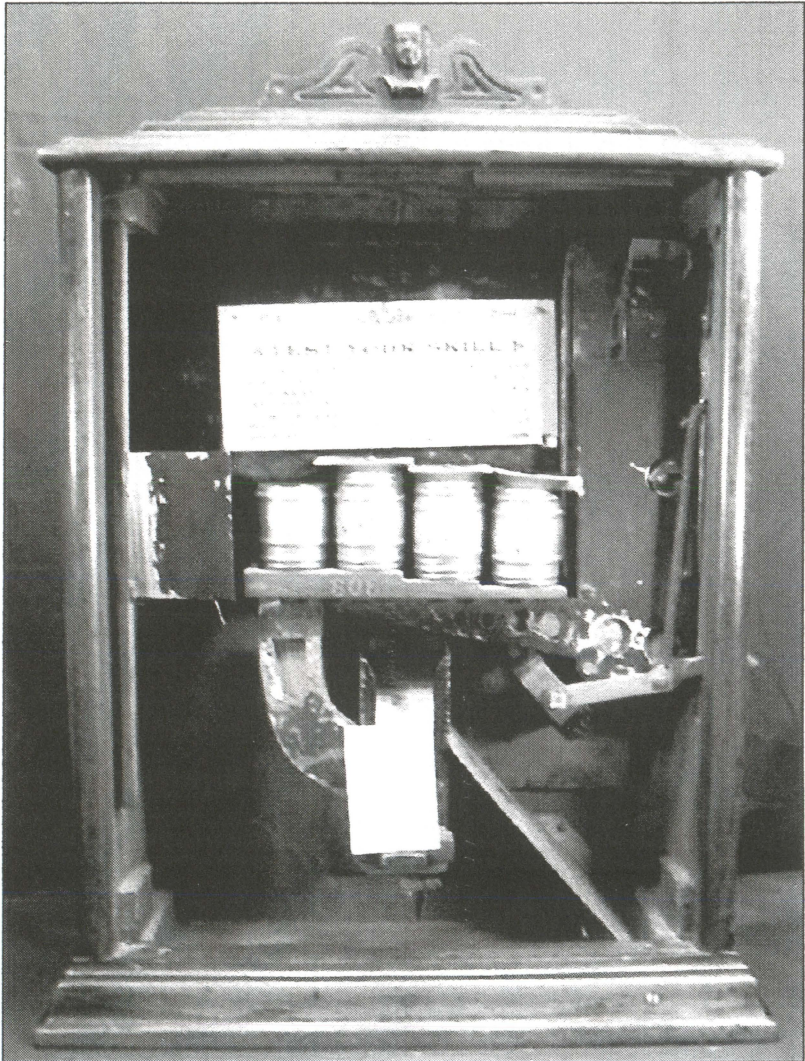
The year was 1896 and the company, Haydon & Urry, was an early stand-out in British coin-op history. Their signature machine, **Tivoli**, is still heralded as one of the earliest commercial successes of the infant industry. As I was trolling through Ebay-US, I ran across an auction entitled: "Antique English 'Business Stimulator' Tavern Game." Excuse me? Looking at the picture, it was clearly a barrels coin-flip game missing the front door. There were copious pictures within the offering, including a close-up of one of the cards that came with the machine.

Armed with these two pieces of information - the photos and the knowledge that this was Haydon & Urry, I turned to Mr. Costa and his Auto-Pleasures for more information. To my pleasant surprise, on page 43 he had reproduced an advertisement from a commercial flyer in 1900 that had a picture of this very machine, titled **The Barrel Machine**. This piece of information was critical in two respects: 1) it dated the machine as being no later than 1900, and 2) it had a fairly detailed picture of the front door to the game. I then cross-referenced Haydon & Urry in *Arcades and Slot Machines* by Paul Braithwaite. I learned Haydon & Urry moved from their location on Grays Inn Road to Islington in 1896. If you look closely at the card pictured below, you will see the address is *34 Grays Inn Road, W.C.* This information helped confirm the date of manufacture as sometime prior to 1896.



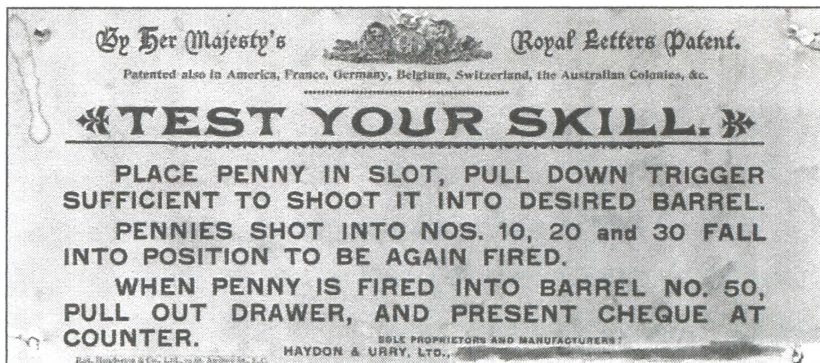
*One of the original redemption cards which came with the machine.*





Besides being a rare game from turn of the century England, this particular game was unusual for three distinctive items. First, it retained the way-cool Egyptian cast iron sphinx on top. Second, it had the original interior instruction card, enumerating the areas of British patent application to include "the Australian colonies, Etc." Finally, it had 45 original aforementioned cards that could be exchanged 'at the counter for a 2d cigar.' (For my American colleagues, 2d means two pennies). To find paper ephemera a century later, and in such good condition and quantity, is truly rare.

Once again, KFC had smiled upon me. The rest was up to me; I had to win the auction. It should come as no surprise that I did just that! My success was assisted by the poor word description of the game. My competition ended up consisting of other Yanks, none of whom knew what this piece really was. I won't disclose the final price for it will only make you jealous, but in the world of Fair Market Value, it was more gift than purchase.



*The cast iron Sphinx mounted at the top front of the case,  
and the original instructions card, in remarkably good condition.*

After taking custody of the game, I had a new door constructed using the picture from Nic's book as the example. You may judge for yourself (Front Cover) as to the success of my efforts. Personally, I am very pleased with the results. I also created the door card using both the Costa picture and one from a similar machine sold by Paul Haskell when he and Nic sold the Costa-Haskell Collection. I am pleased with the card as well.

The game is simple to play. The player deposits a 1d penny in the slot at top right, and the coin drops down to rest against the spring lever inside the machine, bottom right. The player pushes down and releases the lever, propelling the coin upward and over the barrels. If the coin falls into one of the first three barrels, the coin rolls back to the launch position. If the coin falls into the last barrel on the left, it drops down to release the card-pull knob. The player receives the stock card redeemable for a cigar, or whatever else may be provided whilst the eye of authority is turned elsewhere. Most of the coins fly over all barrels and fall into the case for later retrieval by the operator. It is a fun game to play, particularly with the weakly launched coins returning for another try. You can easily get more than one 'flip' for your penny!

If there is a consistent key to my collecting success, it is 'network and knowledge.' My drive to learn more about these fascinating games has led me to other collectors who share my passion. This network of collector friends has greatly added to my knowledge of the games and their history. It is mainly because of their generosity that I write these articles to share what I have learned with you. Your obligation is to pass along your knowledge to others. This sharing and expanding of the field of knowledge is the engine that keeps this hobby viable. Do your part and KFC will smile upon you, too. And I ain't talkin' no penny-flippin' barrel-o'-chicken, neither! Trust me on this one.

*John Peterson, USA*



# Coventry '09

Well, another auction over, and what a day it was! Even allowing for a number of lots that were withdrawn, this was our biggest yet, and from the many emails and 'phone calls I've received, the general consensus suggests it was our best. I think we probably had a slightly higher attendance this year, although it's difficult to judge without physically counting people in. We certainly had the highest number of registered bidders, and even ran out of bidding numbers! It was good to see a number of new faces too, as I'm sure we would all agree that we need to attract new blood to keep our hobby alive.

This year we had two auctioneers, taking fifty lots each alternately. This really kept up the pace, giving bidders little chance of getting bored. I think this worked very well, and both Kevin and Steve have agreed to return next year. On the whole, bidding was enthusiastic, resulting in most lots selling, and overall I think machines sold for about the right money. As usual, there were a few surprises, not least Lot 158, the Clown Catcher, which sold for £1450 – surely a record for such a machine. Another that comes to mind was Lot 66, the 1960s Challenger, which at £370 sold for perhaps twice what some of us may have valued it. The 1930s Bradley Challenger, Lot 204, also made very good money, selling at £570.



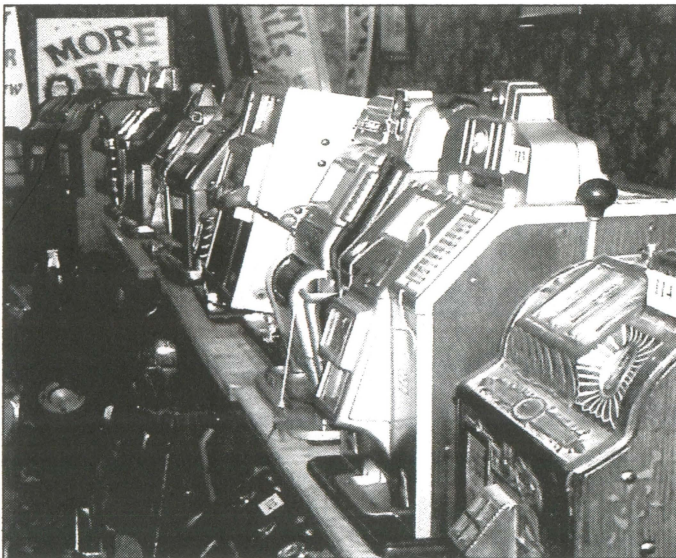
*As usual, the portering skills of Dave and Jeremy prove age and experience win over youth every time! (picture courtesy David Lavender).*

I was particularly pleased to see most of the bandits sell, as I have to admit I was a little nervous with the large number we had on offer this time. Of particular interest was the Sega Hi-Top (Lot 115), which sold for £550, which is perhaps a record for a Sega (albeit a good one). Sadly though, the Rol-a-Top failed to find a buyer.

Prices realised on coins, particularly old pennies and half pennies, were perhaps on the whole more sensible than the incredibly high prices we've seen at our previous auctions, which was probably due to the considerable number of such lots entered this time. Books and spares all seemed to sell quite well, although I was rather surprised that Lot 3 (a nice pinball book) didn't sell. I say surprised, because it was offered with no reserve! Surely someone would have liked it for a pound? Anyway, the vendor has left it with me, so it will be entered next year – be sure not to miss it second time round!

So, another one over, and a great success. Everyone, it seems, had a good day and our hobby and interest in vintage coin-operated machines continues to move forward. Jeremy and I were very pleased with the day, and the fact that these events are so well received makes all the hard work worthwhile. Thanks as always to those of you who assisted on the day, with particular thanks to Kevin (who now holds the permanent post of Head of Security), and to Mr Hoops, who seems to get a year younger every year! Who needs to attend the gym, when you can come and porter at one of our auctions? And, of course, many thanks to Doff for her dedicated number crunching for eight hours!

See you all next year.



*Some of the 40+ bandits on offer – which must surely be a record!  
(picture courtesy Stuart Dale)*

Here are some of the prices realised in the auction. A full list (with pictures) is posted in the ARENA on the pennymachines website.

<b>Lot</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Price</b>
7	Bag of QEII old pennies, mixed clean coins.	35
10	Bag of George VI old pennies.	35
14	3 Allwin locks.	28
17	Box of books on vintage slots, jukeboxes, fairground etc.	45
31	Testo Reaction Meter wall machine.	75
32	Bryans Eleveses allwin, on old penny play.	550
33	Wonders 24 Winning Cups giant allwin.	450
51	£5 bag of 1200 mint old pennies, lead sealed.	52
66	Bradley Super Challenger, GWO on old penny play. New locks.	370
70	Mills Goose Neck one-armed bandit, in console case.	550
71	Jennings Governor one-armed bandit, on 6d play.	640
79	1932 Pace Comet (fancy front), on 6d play, with jackpot.	630
80	Oliver Whales Win-an-Aero allwin, on 1d play, with keys.	440
81	Oak cased Five Win allwin, 1d play, with keys.	330
82	Beromat, on old penny play.	100
83	Duolett, 1950s roulette type wall machine.	490
85	Monte Carlo, interesting coin-operated roulette machine, 1d play.	240
86	Bryans Payramid, working on old penny play.	1300
102	Container of approx. 2000 old pennies.	65
105	Pace Bantam one-armed bandit, working on 5c play.	950
106	One-armed bandit stand.	22
107	One-armed bandit stand.	22
108	Aristocrat Club Master one-armed bandit. GWO on 3d play.	300
113	Jennings Dixie Bell, 1930s one-armed bandit, GWO on 6d play.	570
114	Mills Poinsettia one-armed bandit, GWO on 6d play.	450
115	Sega HI-Top one-armed bandit, all complete with gold award.	550
116	Jubilee twin jackpot one-armed bandit, 6d play, all keys.	200
121	Wonders Arcade allwin, in excellent condition.	610
122	Wonders Wonderpools allwin, in excellent condition.	590
123	Kraft giant 24 cup allwin, on 1d play, with keys.	410
124	'The Domino' wall machine, on 1d play, with keys.	500
125	Bryans Eleveses allwin, on 1d play, with keys.	525
148	Oliver Whales Each Way racing themed allwin.	460



149	Cromptons Beachcomber, large attractive challenger type game.	310
153	Bryans Pilwin 56 allwin, on old penny play.	575
154	Jupiter, rare German wall machine, on old penny play.	180
155	Bryans Worlborl, in excellent condition, on 1d play.	1450
156	Yours to be Won, very rare R & W 'Fill-em-Up' type allwin.	675
158	Clown Catcher, in unspoilt original condition.	1450
159	Bryans Eleveses allwin, on 2p or halfpenny play.	360
160	Allwin De Luxe, on halfpenny play.	410
161	Mills Official pintable, working on old penny play.	90
162	Allwin Deluxe, working on 1p play.	250
167	Hand painted 'What the Butler Saw' sign.	32
170	Hand painted 'More Fun Downstairs' sign.	32
171	Mills/Sega 6d escalator.	42
177	Mills jackpot.	42
193	Bryans Clock, on 2p play.	500
194	Tivoli wall machine, on old penny play.	375
195	Kraft sweets allwin, the only one that vends 5 different packets.	500
198	Early cloth-backed allwin, only one of its type known.	475
203	Sky Divers drop-case machine, on old penny play.	330
204	Challenger drop-case machine, on old penny play.	570
205	Oliver Whales WOT All Winners? Chad theme allwin, on 1d play.	320
206	Jackpot allwin, with visible jackpot payout, on old penny play.	450
207	Allwin Deluxe, in excellent condition, on 1p play.	380
208	Oliver Whales Win a Polo allwin, in excellent condition.	520
224	Box of bandit and allwin spares.	70
228	Robertsons Gollywog badges.	80
230	Dock Master crane, in good working order on 10p play.	390
231	Win a Lot coins pusher, in working order.	260
232	Tip It coin drop machine.	270
234	Cromptons Tip Em Off.	280
235	Aladdin's Lamp coin pusher.	250
240	Wonders Ringla allwin, in excellent condition, on 1d play.	650
241	Novamat, German reel machine on old penny play.	130
242	Groetchen 21 trade stimulator, on old penny play.	90
243	Essex Corn Exchange wall machine.	450
244	Old French allwin, all original.	260
246	Paramount crane, in working order, on old penny play.	700
250	Duchess, German reel machine, on 1d play, with key.	100
251	Mills Poinsettia one-armed bandit, working on 5c or token play.	560

# Playing the Slots Part 6

By Robert Rowland

I hope you have all enjoyed my happy memories of days gone by here in Mablethorpe in the 1960s. Most of the arcades mentioned over the previous months are still here today, only the names have changed. Most of the owners and staff of the 1960s are sadly no longer with us.

Looking back, unless you were actually there, it's impossible to imagine how it really was. Dropping sixpence into the jukebox, then pressing buttons C and then 24, and within seconds the Searchers were singing Needles and Pins just for you! The many large eight player floor machines, like Cromptons 1959 **Film Stars**, where from left to right, Marilyn Monroe paid 6d, Gregory Peck paid 4d, Jane Russell paid 2d, and Ava Gardner paid 2d. These massive machines were the showpieces of all the arcades.



*Cromptons Film Stars.*

Cromptons 3d **Derby Racer** (to my knowledge none exist today). The huge Whittikers **Grand National**, where five horses and their jockeys actually jumped a number of fences on their way to the winning post (albeit on bicycle chains under the machine). There was also a similar machine called **Le Manns**, where five racing cars raced round a track, and whichever coloured car stopped at the finishing line won – the white car was the jackpot, paying 12d.

How many of us rolled our pennies down the chute on Streets **Wheel-Em-In**, just to try and land that penny between the black lines, to win 3d or 6d? The times we thought we had won, yet our eyes deceived us, as the penny was in fact just fractionally touching the black line. We called the attendant, he turned his key in the lock, lifted up the glass, put the penny clearly between the black lines, and the damn machine paid out! He picked up the money, “Nothing wrong with that” he would say, and then walked off.

One true story that comes to mind happened in Jackson’s Radio arcade in 1965. I had won 4d on an electro-mechanical wall machine, and all I got was two clicks and no money. I went and told the attendant (who didn’t believe me), so he played this particular slot for a win. Guess what? It took him over five minutes to actually get a win, and it did just the same, clicked but no coins. I can still see his face now, turning beetroot-red. He paid me, then said “Get out!” All good stuff at the time, they really were magical days.

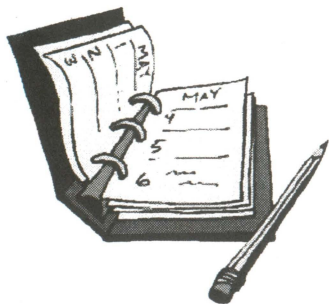
## Epilogue

So my **Playing the Slots** articles have come to an end, hopefully it’s been a wonderful trip down memory lane for you all. Since writing the initial articles, I have managed to add a Bryans **Pilwin** to my collection (my first Bryans machine). The thrill of trying to flick the ball into the clown’s mouth, with wins of 2d, 4d, or 6d. The times I got the 2d, and eventually got the ball to the left of the first tooth, and got the magical 6d win – three full turns of the payout knob!

We can all still relive our childhood memories by visiting some of the old penny arcade places like Jerry’s Mechanical Memories arcade at Brighton. These places are a godsend, and we must all, wherever possible, support them all to make sure that the traditional penny arcade never dies.

*Robert Rowland*





## *Dates for your diary*

### **2010**

**Brighton Jukebox Show** 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> April  
Brighton racecourse

**Bonhams Mechanical Music & Scientific Instruments Sale** 28<sup>th</sup> April  
Knightsbridge

**Bonhams Mechanical Music & Scientific Instruments Sale** 18<sup>th</sup> May  
Knowle

**Great Dorset Steam Fair** 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> September  
Tarrant Hinton, Dorset

**Jukebox Madness Show** 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> September  
Kempton Park racecourse

**MMM Vintage Slot Collectors' Show & Auction** 28<sup>th</sup> November  
Coundon Social Club, Coventry (Provisional)

Don't forget – if you know of any event which would be of interest to readers of the magazine, please let me know so that I can include details in these pages.

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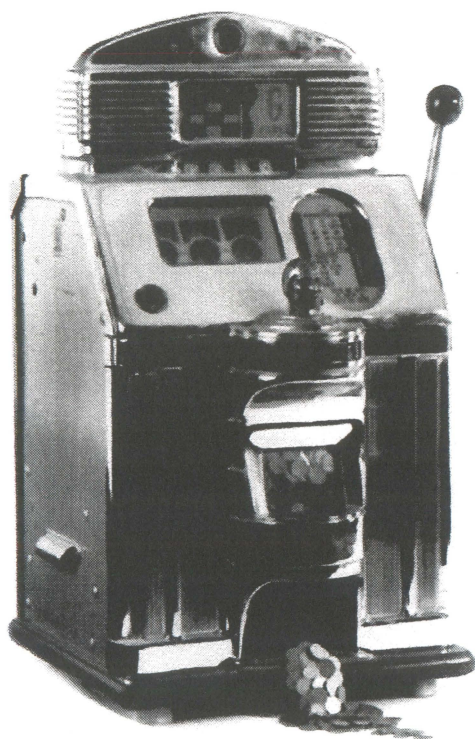
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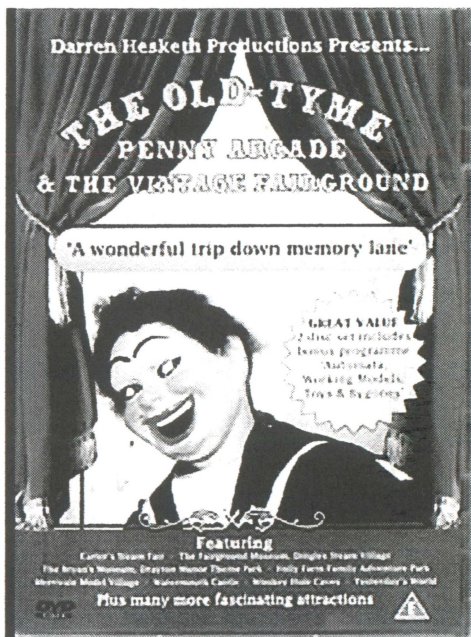
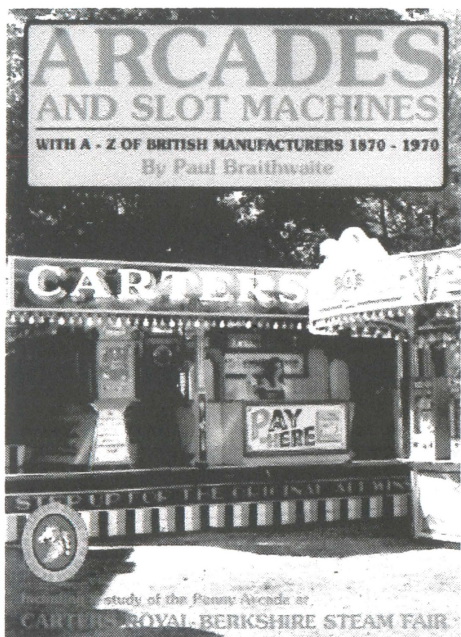
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